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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Benin

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its twenty-eighth session from 6 to 17 November 2017. The review of Benin was held at the 9th meeting, on 10 November 2017. The delegation of Benin was headed by the Keeper of the Seals and Minister of Justice and Legislation, Joseph Fifamin Djogbénou. At its 14th meeting, held on 14 November 2017, the Working Group adopted the report on Benin.

2. On 13 February 2017, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Benin: Ethiopia, Panama and United States of America.

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Benin:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/28/BEN/1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/28/BEN/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/28/BEN/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Liechtenstein, Portugal, Slovenia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay was transmitted to Benin through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The delegation reaffirmed the commitment of Benin to human rights as a foundation on which the State was built, stressing that its report had been prepared following a process of national consultation involving State bodies and civil society actors, with the support of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and the International Organization of la Francophonie.

6. Since 2012, the Government had been working to address the concerns expressed and recommendations and commitments made during the second cycle of the universal periodic review, inter alia, by strengthening the legal, programmatic and institutional frameworks in the area of human rights, although it recognized that further efforts were needed.

7. In particular, Benin had ratified several international and regional human rights treaties, such as the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.

8. At the same time, the process of ratifying other human rights instruments was under way, particularly for:

(a) The amendments to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court relating to the crime of aggression adopted in Kampala;

(b) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure;

(c) The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

9. An important part of the work undertaken by Benin since 2012 had been the incorporation of international standards into national law. Several pieces of legislation had been adopted to that effect, including:

(a) The Children's Code Act of 25 November 2015;

(b) The Act of 13 April 2017 on the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities;

(c) The Act of 16 June 2016 on community service work, which promoted alternative penalties to deprivation of liberty for certain offences;

(d) The Act of 18 March 2013 on the Code of Criminal Procedure, which helped Beninese criminal procedure move towards ensuring better protection of human rights, for example, by allowing persons threatened with deprivation of liberty to challenge their detention before a judge.

10. In response to questions raised, the delegation clarified the status of the death penalty in Benin. After the ratification and entry into force of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the death penalty had been abolished in practice. The Constitutional Court had ruled that any death sentence would be unenforceable, and the sentences of the 14 persons currently sentenced to death were being commuted. The new Criminal Code, which would be adopted in the first quarter of 2018 by Parliament, would formally confirm the abolition of the death penalty in Benin.

11. With regard to the question of the protection of children's rights, in 2015, Benin had adopted a Children's Code that would raise the status of children and afford them protection in all areas. In 2014, Benin had approved a national child protection policy document, which specified, inter alia, the resources available to achieve the objectives set by the State. With a large proportion of the country's population under the age of 25, it was vital to protect this sector of the population legally and economically.

12. In this connection, the delegation addressed the issue of child labour. Many children in Benin were working, often under duress. The Government had put in place instruments to crack down on the main actors and accomplices in child labour, particularly when it was organized by groups on the margins of society. This was provided for above all by the introduction of specific provisions in the draft Criminal Code currently under consideration by the National Assembly.

13. Aside from the crackdown, the delegation raised the issue of economic and social support for the people of Benin in order to combat child labour. There were basic economic and social factors related to access to education, parental employment and social security which encouraged child labour and that the Government was attempting to address through the following measures:

(a) Promotion of compulsory schooling and retention of children in school through the allocation of subsidies and the implementation of a comprehensive school canteen programme in all primary schools;

(b) Establishment of an insurance system, including social security and universal health insurance, and support for the poorest families.

14. In concluding its introductory remarks, the delegation reiterated the commitment of Benin to human rights, stressing that it was the demand for human rights at the 1990 Conference of the Active Forces of the Nations that had enabled the State's transition to a democratic regime. The delegation stood ready to answer questions from the members of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

15. During the interactive dialogue, 82 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

16. Bangladesh welcomed the establishment of the Human Rights Commission and the national authority to combat corruption. It noted that the Children's Code incorporated the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Bangladesh congratulated Benin for having made education accessible for all children and introduced a national fund for youth employment.

17. Belgium welcomed the adoption of the Children's Code in 2015. It commended the comprehensive legal framework to combat impunity and measures to respect the rights of women. However, it noted the lack of significant impact that the latter had had with regard to the situation of women.

18. Botswana commended Benin for the adoption of the Children's Code, the Electoral Code and a decree on the establishment of powers and functions of the national institute for women. It commended the cooperation of Benin with the treaty bodies and human rights mechanisms.

19. China welcomed the adoption of laws to promote and protect the rights of children and people with disabilities. It praised the national plans formulated to combat racial discrimination and improve health care. It noted the efforts of Benin to eliminate poverty, reduce hunger, provide access to drinking water and promote youth employment.

20. Bulgaria commended the enactment of the Children's Code and the policy on free education. It welcomed the efforts of Benin to fulfil its obligations following the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty and the enactment of the new Criminal Code, providing for the abolition of the death penalty.

21. Burkina Faso congratulated Benin for the regulatory legislative measures it had taken since its second review. It regretted, however, the high rate of maternal mortality, harmful practices, in particular female genital mutilation, and child and forced marriages. It urged Benin to adopt the law recognizing the same rights for all children. It invited the international community to support Benin in its efforts.

22. Burundi congratulated Benin for the adoption of its Government Action Programme 2016–2021. It welcomed the adoption of a law to promote and protect persons with disabilities, the drafting of a national action plan to combat racial discrimination and the adoption of a national policy on justice. Burundi acknowledged the efforts of Benin in the area of justice and the incorporation of international treaties in national law.

23. Cabo Verde welcomed the ratification by Benin of the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. It encouraged Benin to share the results of the implementation of its national action plan to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.

24. Canada commended the adoption of the Children's Code in 2015, establishing a legal framework to protect children against sexual exploitation, and encouraged its effective implementation. However, Canada remained concerned that violations of those rights, particularly regarding freedom of expression and assembly, persisted.

25. The Central African Republic congratulated Benin for its broad consultations with civil society while drafting its national report for the universal periodic review and welcomed the adoption of several legal instruments strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights.

26. Chad praised the 2014 national action plan against racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance. It noted with satisfaction the Government Action Programme 2016–2021, the adoption of the Children's Code and the law to prevent and prohibit domestic violence.

27. Brazil commended the development of national action plans to combat racial discrimination and the worst forms of child labour. It welcomed the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. It encouraged Benin to expedite the ratification of other relevant human rights instruments.

28. Congo commended the adoption of the Children's Code. It encouraged the effective implementation of its provisions to eliminate any risk of death or abandonment of children with disabilities at birth, or those so-called "witch children", and to protect children from sale, trafficking and economic and sexual exploitation. Congo welcomed the cooperation of Benin with the treaty bodies and special procedures.

29. Côte d'Ivoire congratulated Benin for the regulatory and legislative measures it had taken to follow up on the recommendations from its second review, particularly the Government Action Programme 2016–2021 and the laws on the Human Rights Commission, the Electoral Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

30. Croatia welcomed the adoption of the Children's Code and the ratification of the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption. It supported the efforts of Benin to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure. Croatia expressed concern at the socioeconomic and regional disparities in children's access to education. It encouraged Benin to address impunity regarding children's rights.

31. Guatemala regretted reports according to which the Human Rights Commission was still not operational, as well as reports of harmful practices against women and girls, in particular female genital mutilation.

32. Djibouti congratulated Benin for the measures it had taken since its last universal periodic review, notably the creation of a national authority to combat corruption, the adoption in 2015 of the Children's Code and the establishment of a national policy to protect children.

33. Egypt commended Benin for the progress it had made on human rights by enhancing legislative structures to ensure the harmonization of national legislation with international standards. It praised the country's submission of its periodic reports to the treaties bodies.

34. Ethiopia commended Benin for its protection and promotion of human rights. It praised its commitment to make education accessible to all, which, in its opinion, had been fulfilled gradually over the past 10 years.

35. France praised the adoption of the Children's Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the text on the creation of the Human Rights Commission. It commended the policies on the protection of children, the development of the justice system and combating violence against women. It was, however, concerned at the situation of vulnerable persons.

36. Georgia praised the ratification of several international agreements and conventions by Benin, including the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the adoption of the Children's Code. While welcoming the establishment in 2013 of the Human Rights Commission, it regretted that it was still not operational.

37. Germany expressed appreciation for the efforts undertaken by Benin to implement the recommendations it had received during its second review and the constructive way in which it was dealing with them. However, Germany remained concerned at the continuing human rights violations.

38. Ghana welcomed the ratification of international treaties by Benin and the national plan to combat racial discrimination, the National Health Development Plan (2009–2018), the national policy to protect children and the national policy on the development of the justice system. Ghana urged Benin to ratify the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

39. Cuba noted that Benin had taken measures to harmonize its national legislation and adopt policies on human rights. Cuba praised the commitment by Benin to apply a new

policy on social security to improve access to social services for all citizens, especially for the poorest.

40. Haiti commended recognition by Benin of the competency of the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights to receive complaints from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals. It welcomed the decision by Benin to exempt girls from paying school fees for secondary education and the adoption of the Children's Code.

41. The Holy See noted the legislative progress in Benin and the initiatives to foster protection, education and health-care services for children, and the birth registration programme to help to combat child trafficking and other forms of slavery. It mentioned the efforts to eradicate the killing of so-called "witch children".

42. Honduras commended the adoption of the national action plan against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It also noted the decision of Benin to exempt girls from paying school fees for secondary education.

43. Iceland welcomed the progress made by Benin since its second review, including the adoption of the Children's Code. However, it noted that there was room for improvement.

44. India welcomed the establishment of a national authority to combat corruption. It noted the measures taken by Benin to combat poverty, strengthen the justice system, generate employment, combat violence against women and children, and implement the right to health. India encouraged Benin to complete the process of setting up its Human Rights Commission and ensuring its independence.

45. Indonesia commended the commitment of Benin to make education accessible to all and the adoption of the Children's Code. It welcomed the establishment, in 2016, of a national framework, through a national charter for social dialogue, to prevent and manage social conflicts, strengthen the democratic process and promote good governance.

46. Iraq welcomed the strengthening of the legal framework for the protection of children, the adoption of the Information and Communication Code and the adoption of the action plan against racial discrimination.

47. Ireland commended Benin for the abolition, in practice, of the death penalty. However, it noted that the sentences of death-row inmates had not yet been commuted. It welcomed the adoption of the Information and Communication Code, although it noted reports of restrictions and suspension of independent media outlets, and that some media offences were still punishable by prison sentences or heavy fines.

48. Italy commended Benin for the adoption of the Information and Communication Code, the Children's Code and the new Code of Criminal Procedure, and for the ratification of the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption.

49. Kenya commended Benin for the efforts it had made in the implementation of the recommendations from previous universal periodic reviews and its engagement with human rights mechanisms, and encouraged it to maintain its efforts in implementing the outcome of the present review.

50. Libya welcomed the progress achieved in strengthening the judiciary and harmonizing national legislation with international standards, and the ratification of a number of international and regional instruments.

51. Madagascar welcomed the measures adopted to combat poverty, strengthen the judiciary, reduce prison overcrowding and combat violence against women and children. It commended the ratification of several international and regional instruments.

52. Malaysia welcomed the efforts made to harmonize the national legislation with international standards, and advancements made in the field of health, education, women's rights, children, housing and land management. It commended the new policy on social protection and access to basic social services, but it noted that infant, neonatal and maternal mortality rates remained high.

53. The Maldives welcomed the Government Action Programme 2016–2021, extension of the free education policy to higher education, steps towards universal access to drinking water and adoption of the Children's Code, the national policy to protect children and the national action plan incorporating the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

54. Mali congratulated Benin for the adoption of the Children's Code and the Information and Communication Code, the creation of the Human Rights Commission, the programmes of the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment, the facilitation of access to credit and the microcredit programmes for the poorest people, the national fund to promote youth employment and the establishment of a national corps of young volunteers to boost development. It encouraged the international community to support the efforts of Benin.

55. Mauritania commended Benin for the strengthening of its legal framework for the promotion and protection of human rights, and for progress made towards employment of young people, better access to basic social services and health care, and improving the quality of health-care services.

56. Mauritius congratulated Benin for the adoption of its Government Action Programme 2016–2021, the Children's Code and the child protection policy and related action plan. It welcomed measures to improve access to drinking water, health services and housing, provide free higher education and support the economic empowerment of women and the nationwide birth registration campaign.

57. Mexico acknowledged the progress of Benin in the area of freedoms of expression and opinion, and measures to improve access to justice and the prison system. Mexico welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the approval of the Code of Persons and Family and a national action plan to combat racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia.

58. Montenegro welcomed the adoption of the action plan against racial discrimination and the law on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, but noted the concerns of the Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning the exclusion of children with disabilities. It regretted that a new Criminal Code abolishing the death penalty had not yet been adopted.

59. Morocco commended the adoption of the Children's Code and a national policy to protect children, the establishment of standards applicable to children's shelters and protection centres and the development of an action plan to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. It welcomed the creation of the Human Rights Commission and provisions in the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure to criminalize torture.

60. The delegation of Benin thanked the Member States for the recommendations made and gave assurances that they would be taken into account.

61. On the question of the suspension, qualified as arbitrary, of certain media outlets, the delegation referred to the recent adoption of an Information Code and the need to observe the rule of law; it also referred to the Audiovisual and Telecommunications Authority, an independent body established under the Constitution.

62. The delegation also stressed that the security forces had not used excessive force while policing recent demonstrations. It indicated that the Government would have applied sanctions in the event of police abuse.

63. With regard to the recommendation to register the births of all citizens, a registration mechanism for registering the Beninese population had been set up to ensure that every citizen was provided with biometric and digital civil-status records so that they could assert their civil, economic, social and political rights.

64. As for strengthening the judicial system, the process of providing resources and recruiting 118 young trainee judges, in addition to the 150 members of the judiciary already employed, continued.

65. Concerning the prison population, the delegation indicated that the number of prisoners had decreased from 7,247 in 2012 to 6,297 in 2017 (out of a national population of more than 10 million). There were 179 minors, including 7 girls, and 243 women, including 26 mothers of young children, held in prisons in Benin. The separation between the male/female and adult/minor quarters had been ensured thanks to the organizations and strategic partners that had provided assistance to Benin on separation measures.

66. Of these prisoners, 60 to 70 per cent were incarcerated on a temporary basis and few would be subject to criminal sanctions. Benin had just adopted a decree to separate prisons from correctional facilities. A prison agency had recently been created to deal exclusively with prison establishments.

67. The delegation added that the Beninese Human Rights Commission was also being set up.

68. In addition, the Beninese Criminal Code, currently under consideration by the National Assembly, would contain material relating to crimes against humanity and torture.

69. The delegation then recalled that the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, had been ratified. The Supreme Council of Justice was going to adopt a decree commuting the death penalty to appropriate penalties.

70. Also on the subject of the ratification of treaties, the delegation recalled that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women had been ratified.

71. The delegation affirmed that prosecutions had been carried out and sentences handed down for impermissible actions against *vidomegon* children.

72. With regard to cultural or ritual mutilation and infanticide, the Government was not aware of any cases that had not resulted in prosecutions. In addition, an awareness-raising campaign had been launched in traditional places of worship where children were provided with education and health care, and irregularities observed were punished.

73. Namibia commended Benin for the progress it had made in implementing the recommendations of its second review, despite the various challenges regarding capacity faced by the country, and encouraged it to continue implementing the Government Action Programme 2016–2021 with emphasis on its third pillar on improving the living conditions of the population.

74. Nepal welcomed the adoption of the law creating the Human Rights Commission and encouraged Benin to make it operational as early as possible. It commended Benin for the launch of a national policy to protect children and related action plan, steps taken towards the abolition of the death penalty and protecting women's rights and economic, social and cultural rights.

75. The Netherlands welcomed the efforts to improve prison conditions and abolish the death penalty. It encouraged Benin to develop a concerted strategy to reduce prison overcrowding and remove the death penalty from all national legislation.

76. Nigeria welcomed the creation of the Human Rights Commission, a national authority to combat corruption and the regional offices of the Ombudsman. It also welcomed the improvements in prison conditions and the efforts made to bring national legislation into line with international standards.

77. Pakistan welcomed the efforts made towards the eradication of poverty, ensuring women's rights and combating violence against women. It appreciated the adoption of the Children's Code and the national policy to protect children and its action plan.

78. Portugal thanked Benin for its report and welcomed the establishment of a programme of "child-friendly" courts.

79. Qatar welcomed the ratification by Benin of a range of international instruments and the setting up of human rights bodies. It commended initiatives that had been undertaken to facilitate the population's access to health services.

80. The Republic of Korea commended Benin for its 14-point national implementation plan following its second review, and for the adoption of the Children's Code and of the new Code of Criminal Procedure, guaranteeing the right to a fair trial.

81. The Republic of Moldova welcomed the strengthening of the legal protection of children, the justice system development policy, the action plan against racial discrimination, the adoption of a document on the standard operating procedures to be followed in combating violence against women, the recognition of the competence of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights to receive cases from NGOs and individuals. It asked whether the rights of children to be heard and participate in public life were ensured in the legislation.

82. Rwanda commended the efforts that had been made to improve the social and economic status of the population and to accede to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It encouraged Benin to remove provisions pertaining to the death penalty from its Criminal Code.

83. Saudi Arabia praised the measures that had been taken by Benin to encourage the employment of young people, especially through programmes carried out by the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and the facilitation of credit and microcredit.

84. Senegal welcomed the adoption of a national action plan against racial discrimination, the signing of a national charter on social dialogue by the Government, the National Employers Council and trade unions, and the adoption of the Government Action Programme 2016–2021.

85. Sierra Leone commended the adoption of a national action plan against racial discrimination, the Children's Code and the Government Action Programme 2016–2021. It also commended Benin for hosting the African symposium for human rights defenders in 2017.

86. Slovenia noted with appreciation the adoption of the Children's Code and a national policy to protect children, and the accession of Benin to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It expressed concern at the prevalence of, and impunity for, female genital mutilation and early and forced marriages, especially in rural areas, and at prison overcrowding and the conditions of detention. It encouraged Benin to bring its Criminal Code into line with its international commitments.

87. South Africa welcomed the Constitutional Court's ruling on the illegality of the death penalty, and commended Benin for the Children's Code and the promotion of youth employment. It also welcomed the improvement of the screening and care of people living with HIV/AIDS, as well as the setting-up of integrated support centres for victims of gender-based violence.

88. South Sudan commended Benin for ratifying several regional and international legal instruments. It noted with satisfaction that Benin had adopted several laws during its second review, and the incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into the Children's Code.

89. Spain welcomed the creation of the Human Rights Commission and the ratification of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.

90. The State of Palestine commended Benin for the adoption of the Children's Code and echoed the recommendation to adopt a comprehensive strategy with local protection mechanisms accessible to children. It welcomed the acceptance by Benin of the recommendation made during its second review to provide free education.

91. Sudan commended the ratification and/or adoption of several regional and international conventions and strategic plans. It encouraged Benin to improve women and children's rights and the situation in prisons. It encouraged Benin to take the necessary measures to fight poverty and support social and economic rights.

92. Switzerland welcomed the adoption of the 2015 Children's Code. However, it noted that numerous challenges persisted in that area. It also noted that the health system was still fragile and that emergency care was not accessible to all.

93. Timor-Leste commended the adoption of the action plan against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the Government's decision in 2015 to exempt girls from fees for secondary schools.

94. Togo commended Benin for the improvements it had made in the field of human rights and the various positive legislative changes, and the creation of a national institution to promote women's rights and of a national authority to combat corruption. Togo called on the international community to continue supporting Benin in its efforts to improve the situation of vulnerable persons.

95. Tunisia welcomed the steps taken by Benin to implement recommendations from the previous cycle. It commended the cooperation of Benin with UNHCR and the establishment of the Human Rights Commission.

96. Turkey welcomed the adoption of the Children's Code in 2015 and the decision to exempt girls from fees at secondary schools. It appreciated the legislative progress in Benin and the national action plans in the area of human rights.

97. Ukraine welcomed the adoption of the Children's Code, the Information and Communication Code and the law on the establishment of the Human Rights Commission. Ukraine recognized the commitment of Benin to eliminate torture and the steps taken in that regard, including the adoption of new laws and the organization of related training programmes.

98. The United Kingdom welcomed the decision of the Constitutional Court to abolish the death penalty. It urged Benin to implement recommendations regarding prison conditions. It remained concerned at the continued practice of ritual infanticide and urged Benin to work closely with experts and NGOs to eradicate it. It supported recommendations from the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material. While welcoming the measures taken in the security sector, it remained concerned at the lack of independence of the judiciary.

99. The United States recognized the efforts of Benin to protect children from human trafficking. However, it remained concerned at the lack of sufficient measures and that the penalties for trafficking crimes were weak. It applauded the launch of a national authority to combat corruption and the collaboration between the Government and civil society actors on good governance and transparency initiatives. It noted that early and forced marriage continued to be a major problem in Benin.

100. Uruguay, while welcoming the measures that had been taken by Benin to eliminate gender imbalance, it shared the concern of OHCHR at the absence of a national mechanism for monitoring the rights of women and the lack of related data. Uruguay welcomed the advances regarding birth registration further to the creation of the General Direction of the Civil Registry. It was concerned at the observations made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization regarding the accessibility and quality of education.

101. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomed the legislative progress that had been made in Benin, including the adoption of the law on community work in 2016 and the Children's Code in 2015. It highlighted the implementation of the Government Action Programme 2016–2021, aimed at strengthening democracy.

102. Viet Nam welcomed the results of Benin in implementing the recommendations made during the second cycle, and the public policies to promote and protect economic, social and cultural rights, in particular the adoption of laws on promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and the Children's Code. It noted the challenges faced by Benin regarding food security, access to drinking water and housing.

103. Zambia noted with satisfaction the measures taken to combat poverty, strengthen the justice system, reduce prison overcrowding, combat violence against women and children and promote economic, social and cultural rights, including improving prison conditions.

104. Zimbabwe welcomed the creation of the Human Rights Commission, the adoption of the Children's Code and the development of the national action plans to combat and

eliminate the worst forms of child labour and racial discrimination. It also noted the measures that had been taken by Benin to promote youth employment, and the rights to water, food, housing, health and education.

105. Algeria noted that the legislative framework had been reinforced regarding the rights of children, communication and information, elections and justice. It welcomed the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and People's Rights, and the creation of a national institute to promote the rights of women, a national authority to combat corruption and shelters for children.

106. Angola welcomed the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and People's Rights and the adoption of the Human Rights Commission and a national action plan on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

107. Argentina thanked Benin for the submission of its national report and made recommendations.

108. Armenia, while welcoming progress made at the legislative level, remained concerned at the persistence of discrimination against women. It welcomed the decennial plan on education and encouraged Benin to ensure free education for all and increase school enrolment for girls. It also encouraged Benin to improve access to birth registration.

109. Australia commended Benin on the removal of provisions for the death penalty from its Code of Criminal Procedure and on its contribution to the launch of the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage and its related national campaign. Australia was concerned at the reportedly poor conditions in prisons in Benin.

110. Azerbaijan welcomed the establishment of a national authority to combat corruption and the fact that Benin had started to organize competitive recruitment of civil servants. It also commended the efforts of Benin to implement the right to education, in particular its policy on free education.

111. The delegation thanked all speakers and confirmed that their expressions of encouragement would be taken into account.

112. On issues relating to forced labour and forced marriage, the delegation promised that such acts would be prosecuted and that responses to the recommendations would be provided.

113. With regard to the independence of the judiciary, Benin stated that it was making every effort to strengthen its judicial system by extending the judicial map and recruiting clerks and more judges.

114. In a difficult national and global context, satisfying the economic, social and cultural rights of citizens was proving difficult to achieve. However, the Government of Benin remained focused on the human rights situation.

115. In addition, Benin had undertaken to follow up on all the comments it had accepted, including those relating to the establishment and functioning of the Beninese Human Rights Commission.

116. The delegation appealed to technical and financial partners to continue to support Benin in implementing development programmes, including for the promotion and protection of human rights.

117. In conclusion, the delegation reiterated its appreciation to the troika, Council members, Member States and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their support.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

118. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue listed below have been examined by Benin and enjoy the support of Benin:**

118.1 **Speed up the ratification process of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Burundi); Step up efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Indonesia); Promptly ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Guatemala);**

118.2 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Montenegro) (Portugal);**

118.3 **Speed up the ratification process of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which establishes a communication procedure (Burundi);**

118.4 **Promptly ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Guatemala);**

118.5 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Iraq);**

118.6 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Mexico);**

118.7 **Accelerate the process of ratification of the international instruments listed in the national report (see para. 13) (Madagascar);**

118.8 **Ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) of the International Labour Organization (Guatemala);**

118.9 **Sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (Guatemala);**

118.10 **Ratify the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity (Armenia);**

118.11 **Intensify efforts to submit national reports to the various treaty bodies (Iraq);**

118.12 **Adopt an open, merit-based selection process when selecting national candidates for treaty body elections (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

118.13 **Take specific and effective measures to make the Human Rights Commission fully operational, and also to guarantee the Commission's independence by ensuring adequate resources and financial autonomy as recommended by the Human Rights Committee (Bangladesh);**

118.14 **Speed up the process of selecting the members of the Human Rights Commission to make it operational (Côte d'Ivoire);**

118.15 **Appoint the members of the Human Rights Commission and provide the necessary means for its functioning and independence (France);**

118.16 **Appoint the members of the Human Rights Commission and ensure their independence by providing them with financial autonomy and sufficient human and material resources to carry out their mandate, in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) (Guatemala);**

118.17 **Continue efforts to make sure that the Human Rights Commission functions in an effective and independent manner (Georgia);**

118.18 **Make the national Human Rights Commission operational (Germany);**

118.19 **Continue the establishment of the Human Rights Commission (Iraq);**

118.20 **Take the necessary measures to ensure that the national Human Rights Commission is fully functional and equipped with the necessary mandate and resources in accordance with the Paris Principles (Nepal);**

118.21 **Undertake the necessary steps to ensure that the national Human Rights Commission operates in accordance with the Paris Principles, particularly in terms of its financial independence and with sufficient human and material resources to enable it to effectively exercise its mandate (Netherlands);**

118.22 **Ensure that the national Human Rights Commission operates in compliance with the Paris Principles, particularly in terms of its financial independence (Republic of Korea);**

118.23 **Finalize the set-up of the Human Rights Commission and ensure its functioning in accordance with the Paris Principles (Republic of Moldova);**

118.24 **Enhance its efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of its human rights institution to bring it fully into line with the Paris Principles (Rwanda);**

118.25 **Set up the Human Rights Commission, which was created in 2013 (Senegal);**

118.26 **Expedit the functionality of its national human rights institution (Sierra Leone);**

118.27 **Expedite the setting up of the Human Rights Commission (South Africa);**

118.28 **Continue to build up the national human rights institutional framework, in particular the Human Rights Commission, and ensure its effective functioning (Ukraine);**

118.29 **Fully capacitate and empower the national institute for women (South Africa);**

118.30 **Continue efforts to harmonize nation legislation with international conventions to which Benin is a party (Qatar);**

118.31 **Take all necessary measures to ensure that national human rights instruments are rigorously implemented (Burkina Faso);**

118.32 **Speed up the process of adoption of the new Criminal Code (Georgia);**

118.33 **Expedite the adoption of the draft law on trafficking in persons in accordance with international law (Iceland);**

118.34 **Promulgate the adopted texts in order to make them effective and operational (Madagascar);**

118.35 **Adopt the various legislative recommendations, including the act on gender and women's participation in political life, and a national monitoring mechanism for women's rights (Namibia);**

118.36 **Expedite legislation to criminalize torture and bring perpetrators to justice, in accordance with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Republic of Korea);**

118.37 **Adopt the new Criminal Code so as to finally exclude the death penalty from its legislation (Republic of Moldova);**

118.38 **Expedite the adoption of the draft law on trafficking in persons, in accordance with international law (Timor-Leste);**

118.39 **Speed up the adoption of the new Criminal Code (Zambia);**

118.40 **Ensure that Parliament adopts all the pending legislation (Zambia);**

118.41 **Bring its national legislation into conformity with the provisions of the international human rights instruments to which it is a party (Zimbabwe);**

118.42 **Pass legislation as soon as possible to ensure that the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is implemented in domestic law as soon as practicable (Australia);**

118.43 **Continue efforts to combat discrimination (Morocco);**

118.44 **Continue to promote economic and social sustainable development, raise people's standard of living and lay a solid foundation for the enjoyment of all human rights by its people (China);**

118.45 **Continue to establish policy to support the creation of income-generating activities through the provision of ongoing training, the promotion of entrepreneurship and the granting of credit to specific projects (Ethiopia);**

118.46 **Implement pillar 3 of the Government Action Programme 2016–2021, which focuses on improving the living conditions of the population (Cuba);**

118.47 **Continue to mobilize resources and the necessary technical support to further enhance its capacity to fulfil its human rights obligations (Nigeria);**

118.48 **Sustain and scale up the ongoing efforts to attain the Sustainable Development Goals, such as access to drinking water, food security, access to health care and education (Nigeria);**

118.49 **Consider adopting development plans to improve the living conditions of the vulnerable populations, especially women and children (Pakistan);**

118.50 **Further strengthen its efforts to combat poverty for provision of equitable access and resources to all its people (Pakistan);**

118.51 **Continue and further expand its microcredit programme for the poorest people and ensure loan allocations to women (Pakistan);**

118.52 **Develop infrastructure in rural areas to enable better access for people to basic social services (Senegal);**

118.53 **Continue strengthening its social programmes to improve the quality of life of its people, in particular the most in need, with the assistance and cooperation that the country requests (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

118.54 **Take further proper legislative measures to abolish the death penalty (Ukraine);**

118.55 **Commute the sentences of the last individuals to be sentenced to death and work to improve the detention conditions in the country's prisons (Canada);**

118.56 **Complete the process aimed at the abolition of the death penalty (Central African Republic);**

118.57 **Adopt, as soon as possible, the Criminal Code containing the provisions on the abolition of the death penalty and the criminalization of torture, and adopt the law criminalizing all forms of trafficking and the decrees of application of the Children's Code (France);**

118.58 **Approve the Criminal Code and, in particular, the abolition of the death penalty (Holy See);**

118.59 **Reflect the abolition of the death penalty in its legislative framework and commute existing death sentences to prison sentences (Ireland);**

118.60 **Commute the sentences of the inmates currently sentenced to death and, having already acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, speed up the adoption of the new Criminal Code to abolish the death penalty (Namibia);**

118.61 **Take appropriate measures to fight against so-called acts of popular justice (Congo);**

118.62 **Undertake investigations on extrajudicial killings in order to bring the perpetrators to justice and to provide reparation to the victims or to their families (Montenegro);**

118.63 **Make torture a criminal offence in accordance with the Convention against Torture (Zambia);**

118.64 **Conduct prompt and impartial investigations into allegations of torture and ensure that anyone committing such a crime receives a punishment commensurate with the gravity of the act (Zambia);**

118.65 **Launch the human rights educational programmes for law enforcement officers on combating torture and respect for human rights (Ukraine);**

118.66 **Strictly apply the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, in particular those relating to the maximum period of detention on remand (France);**

118.67 **Take steps to reform the prison system and to ensure the protection of the rights of detainees (Italy);**

118.68 **Continue improving the often still precarious conditions in Benin prisons (Germany);**[1]

118.69 **Continue its efforts aimed at improving detention conditions (Central African Republic);**

118.70 **Take all necessary measures for the strict separation of detainees according to their age, sex and status, with the aim of improving prison conditions, as follow-up to paragraphs 108.34, 108.36, 108.37 and 108.38 of the recommendations from the second cycle (Haiti);**

118.71 **Redouble efforts to improve the conditions of the detention facilities, with particular consideration for women and children, and expedite trials (Holy See);**

118.72 **Improve prisons and the living and health conditions in detention facilities and, in particular, end overcrowding and the lack of sanitation, enable easy visits by the relatives of children and prohibit and punish prison officers for acts of torture and ill-treatment (Kenya);**

118.73 **Take further steps to conclude the ongoing prison modernization (Nigeria);**

118.74 **Continue to improve prison conditions, enhancing measures already adopted to avoid overcrowding, malnutrition and poor sanitation, and end the abusive use of pretrial detention (Spain);**

118.75 **Continue efforts to improve prison conditions, prison capacity and find alternative solutions to imprisonment (Angola);**

118.76 **Address the overcrowding of prisons, including through actions to minimize long pretrial detention periods (Australia);**

118.77 **Guarantee the poorest people access to legal aid (France);**

118.78 **Support the efforts of the judiciary to effectively implement the adopted reforms by ensuring adequate financial support from the Ministry of Justice as foreseen in the national development plan in the area of justice (Germany);**

[1] The recommendation as read during the interactive dialogue was "Continue improving the often still miserable conditions in Benin prisons" (Germany).

118.79 **Significantly strengthen the cooperation between the different actors of the judiciary to avoid long pretrial detention and to ensure every citizen's right to a fair trial in due time (Germany);**

118.80 **Finalize the ongoing judicial reforms, in particular on the Criminal Code (Senegal);**

118.81 **Continue to strengthen efforts to provide better legal protection for vulnerable groups, especially women, children and youth, by increasing the number of specialized judges and providing free legal services for those who seek it (Netherlands);**

118.82 **Sustain and strengthen nascent anti-corruption and transparency initiatives, in consultation with civil society, including through follow-on discussions to the national anti-corruption forum held in June (United States of America);**

118.83 **Revise the bill on freedom of association, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, submitted in 2012, which is currently pending review by the Supreme Court, with a view to adopting legislation that will protect the rights of civil society (Canada);**

118.84 **Continue its efforts to establish efficient and transparent public services (Azerbaijan);**

118.85 **Take the necessary measures for the adoption of laws on the new Criminal Code, trafficking in persons and the prison system (Côte d'Ivoire);**

118.86 **Continue efforts to put an end to human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children (Iraq);**

118.87 **Legislate to counter human trafficking and protect victims (South Africa);**

118.88 **Take all necessary steps to enforce laws on forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking, in particular on child trafficking (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

118.89 **Finalize and enact legislation to criminalize all forms of human trafficking, as defined in international law, with sufficiently stringent penalties (United States of America);**

118.90 **Continue strengthening the action plan on the trafficking of human beings in order to prevent this crime, providing protection to victims and punishing the perpetrators (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

118.91 **Seek to legislate minimum standards for the elimination of people trafficking, including the trafficking of women and girls (Australia);**

118.92 **Continue applying effective measures for the promotion of employment among young people that allow fair and satisfactory labour conditions (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

118.93 **Continue its efforts to further promote the integration of young people into the labour market (Viet Nam);**

118.94 **Adopt integrated local development plans to improve the living conditions and living standards of vulnerable populations (Congo);**

118.95 **Continue to step up investment in agriculture and ensure food security (China);**

118.96 **Continue its efforts in the fight against hunger, in order to achieve food security and ensure that all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (Brazil);**

118.97 **Take all necessary measures to reduce the proportion of populations suffering from hunger (Saudi Arabia);**

118.98 **Seek technical assistance to address food security challenges in order to mitigate the negative effects of malnutrition and poverty (Sierra Leone);**

118.99 **Set up strategies to support and strengthen the progress recently achieved in the area of food security (Viet Nam);**

118.100 **Take all necessary measures to promote access to clean drinking water for all (Saudi Arabia);**

118.101 **Continue efforts to ensure better access of the population to drinking water and sanitation (Algeria);**

118.102 **Continue to develop its health-care undertakings to better guarantee people's right to health (China);**

118.103 **Strengthen the public health system to ensure better access to primary care for all, especially through universal health coverage (Djibouti);**

118.104 **Continue the implementation of health services through policies aimed at strengthening infrastructure in urban and rural areas (Ethiopia);**

118.105 **Improve health-care infrastructure, access to emergency obstetric care, midwife training and health-care access for women from both rural and urban backgrounds (Holy See);**

118.106 **Adopt a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health policy for adolescents (Iceland);**

118.107 **Improve the health-care infrastructure, particularly by paying special attention to enhancing access to health care for women in poor and rural areas (India);**

118.108 **Improve health-care infrastructure in general to enable access to health care for all and especially access to emergency obstetric care, midwife training and resources devoted to maternal health (Kenya);**

118.109 **Increase efforts to reduce infant, neonatal and maternal mortality, through systematic prevention and treatment mechanisms and accessible maternal and infant health-care services (Malaysia);**

118.110 **Extend the access and improve the quality of services of prenatal, postnatal and obstetrics health care, in order to reduce the maternal mortality rate (Mexico);**

118.111 **Improve access for everyone to quality health services (Qatar);**

118.112 **Fully fund implementation of the new national plan to combat HIV-related stigmatization and discrimination (South Africa);**

118.113 **Set up an inclusive health policy to ensure that, in particular, emergency care is more effective and more accessible for all (Switzerland);**

118.114 **Continue efforts in order to provide health and education services to a larger part of the population and continue initiatives related to social housing (Libya);**

118.115 **Continue addressing illiteracy, particularly in rural areas (Indonesia);**

118.116 **Accelerate the implementation of the policy on free education, in order to ensure that all children, particularly those from disadvantaged households, are not deprived of their right to education (State of Palestine);**

118.117 **Continue providing human rights training within the municipalities and in schools providing general education (Cuba);**

118.118 **Provide free primary education, create a safe and protective environment for all children to keep them in the education system, especially those in rural and remote areas (Kenya);**

118.119 **Continue the measures to reinforce access to education (Morocco);**

118.120 **Strengthen school infrastructure, taking into account the concerns of women and girls, particularly as regards access to appropriate sanitation facilities (Portugal);**

118.121 **Ensure that sexual and reproductive health education is mandatory for all adolescents, irrespective of their gender (Portugal);**

118.122 **Improve hygiene conditions, nutrition and access to drinking water in schools (Portugal);**

118.123 **Strengthen literary programmes for women and girls living in rural communities (Sierra Leone);**

118.124 **Implement measures to reduce the high drop-out rate among girls from schools, ensuring free primary education (Uruguay);**

118.125 **Continue its efforts to increase the quality and availability of education at all levels and all over the country (Azerbaijan);**

118.126 **Continue efforts to stop violence against women (Egypt);**

118.127 **Step up efforts to disseminate information on the existence of new legislative provisions related to the prevention and prohibition of violence against women, ensuring women are duly informed of all the legal channels available to them (Belgium);**

118.128 **Ensure that cases of violence against women and children are thoroughly investigated, perpetrators are prosecuted and sentenced and victims receive reparation (France);**

118.129 **Strengthen efforts to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women and children, in particular, practices such as female genital mutilation and child and early forced marriage. Ensure that victims of such violence receive appropriate help and that perpetrators are brought to justice (Italy);**

118.130 **Strengthen and implement measures to promote gender equality and equity, address the underrepresentation of women in decision-making bodies, gender-based violence and elimination of harmful traditional practices (Rwanda);**

118.131 **Redouble its efforts to significantly reduce the rates of neonatal and maternal mortality, harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation, child marriage and forced marriage (Burkina Faso);**

118.132 **Step up efforts to more efficiently implement the prohibition of female genital mutilation in all areas of the country and among all groups of citizens (Germany);**

118.133 **Ensure that cases of violence against women are investigated, perpetrators prosecuted and victims awarded reparation (Iceland);**

118.134 **Continue taking steps to reduce gender-based violence and promoting gender equality (Indonesia);**

118.135 **Implement a coordination strategy between the heath and justice authorities to prevent and punish acts of female genital mutilation (Mexico);**

118.136 **Establish a mechanism to facilitate victim identification and ensure prosecution and punishment of all acts of female genital mutilation (Slovenia);**

118.137 **Continue its efforts to reduce the prevalence of female genital mutilation in the country (South Sudan);**

118.138 **Make progress in eradicating violence against women, stepping up actions such as awareness-raising campaigns and the creation of shelters, and implementing measures to contribute to the eradication of female genital mutilation and child marriage (Spain);**

118.139 **Step up actions in the area of gender equality, including the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda to guarantee the participation of women in all areas of decision-making (Spain);**

118.140 **Implement measures and awareness-raising campaigns to eradicate female genital mutilation and other harmful practices against women (Uruguay);**

118.141 **Continue the measures already undertaken to strengthen the fight against harmful practices and violence against women (Armenia);**

118.142 **Continue efforts to combat discrimination against women and eliminate all forms of discrimination against them, especially domestic violence (Tunisia);**

118.143 **Take the necessary measures in law and in practice to put an end to discrimination between men and women regarding nationality (Algeria);**

118.144 **Adopt the draft law establishing quotas for women in elections, putting them in an advantageous position, as follow-up to paragraphs 108.42, 108.50 and 108.87 of the recommendations from the second cycle (Haiti);**

118.145 **Continue its efforts to promote women's rights by increasing the representation of women in both the public and private sectors (Maldives);**

118.146 **Continue the implementation of policies to encourage the sustainable economic empowerment of women, in particular in rural areas (Bulgaria);**

118.147 **Establish a national mechanism for the advancement of women in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Honduras);**

118.148 **Continue efforts to protect the rights of women and children, as well as other vulnerable groups (Nepal);**

118.149 **Strengthen the literacy programmes for women and girls, in particular in rural areas (Turkey);**

118.150 **Take practical measures to ensure the full and proper implementation of the Children's Code, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2016 (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

118.151 **Ensure the effective implementation of the Children's Code with a view to protect the rights of this vulnerable group (Belgium);**

118.152 **Establish a national institution for the monitoring of children and the collection and analysis of the data concerning children (Cabo Verde);**

118.153 **Fast-track the implementation of the Children's Code in order to curb harmful practices against children, including child, early and forced marriages, the sale of children and the killing of so-called "sorcerer's children" (Namibia);**

118.154 **Ensure respect for the rights and fundamental freedoms of children through sanctioning the authors of all exploitation and forced labour practices (Argentina);**

118.155 **Carry out investigations into cases of harmful practices against children, ensure that the perpetrators are prosecuted and remove children from environments in which such practices are carried out (Belgium);**

118.156 **Provide legal aid to child victims and their guardians to strengthen their access to courts (Botswana);**

118.157 **Launch awareness-raising campaigns aimed at changing the attitude and practices related to ill-treatment and the abuse of children (Bulgaria);**

118.158 **Investigate and prosecute all persons responsible for harmful practices against children, following the adoption of the new Children's Code (Croatia);**

118.159 **Strengthen awareness and education programmes, prevent harmful traditional practices against women and girls and ensure that victims have access to resources and protection and rehabilitation mechanisms (Guatemala);**

118.160 **Pursue efforts by taking the appropriate measures favourable to the schooling of girls and their retention at school, in particular by fighting the practice of *vidomegons* (Djibouti);**

118.161 **Take further steps to design policies and programmes to address the ill-treatment and abuse of children and institute mandatory reporting procedures regarding child abuse (Iceland);**

118.162 **Strengthen its efforts to combat ill-treatment of and violence against children, and provide street children with the necessary protection, as well as the housing, medical services, education and access to social services they need (Mauritania);**

118.163 **Develop a strategic framework for the comprehensive protection of children as regards trafficking and sexual exploitation (Sierra Leone);**

118.164 **Make efforts to design and adopt policies and programmes to raise awareness concerning the ill-treatment and abuse of children (State of Palestine);**

118.165 **Guarantee the implementation and the effectiveness of the Children's Code, particularly making accessible the relevant public services and providing the necessary human and financial resources (Turkey);**

118.166 **Combat the exploitation of and violence against children (Turkey);**

118.167 **Continue efforts to strengthen the rights of the child, protect children from sexual exploitation and combat trafficking in children and early marriage (Tunisia);**

118.168 **Continue its efforts to combat child, early and forced marriages by addressing their causes through the effective implementation of the action plan for its national child protection policy (Canada);**

118.169 **Take appropriate and robust measures for the elimination of practices, such as the placement of children, early marriages and child trafficking (Central African Republic);**

118.170 **Implement the recently adopted Children's Code and prosecute all crimes and offences against children, including child marriage, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and trafficking in children (Brazil);**

118.171 **Adopt measures to put an end to harmful practices, such as early and forced marriages and genital mutilation, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Honduras);**

118.172 **Establish a national mechanism for the protection of the rights of children, and allocate human and financial resources for its functioning (Honduras);**

118.173 **Take the necessary measures to protect children from early marriage, trafficking and infanticide (Republic of Korea);**

118.174 **Continue efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the Children's Code to guarantee that those cases of ritual infanticide, sexual child abuse, trafficking in children and early marriage are prosecuted and sanctioned (Switzerland);**

118.175 **Strengthen information campaigns against early and forced marriage and enforce laws already in place (United States of America);**

118.176 **Adopt effective measures against child exploitation and trafficking, including raising public awareness, combating impunity and protecting victims (Spain);**

118.177 **Raise awareness among the communities on the prohibition of child labour, particularly in relation to the common social practice whereby a child, usually a daughter, is sent to live as a servant with a wealthier family, which lends itself to acts of human trafficking (Botswana);**

118.178 **Strengthen control mechanisms to prevent and combat the economic exploitation of children (Chad);**

118.179 **Strengthen the efforts to effectively fight child labour and child trafficking by taking more preventive measures and implementing more punitive measures (Germany);**

118.180 **Take additional measures on social, economic and legal protection to combat child labour (Angola);**

118.181 **Keep improving the system of child registration at birth and avoid any form of violence against children (Holy See);**

118.182 **Create a system of easy access for the registration of newborns (Honduras);**

118.183 **Intensify efforts to raise awareness among the public of the importance of birth registration and the birth registration process (Turkey);**

118.184 **Continue to step up efforts to guarantee that all births of children are registered, especially in rural areas (Uruguay);**

118.185 **Continue in its efforts to promote the rights of the child and consider setting up a centralized civil registration system (Mauritius);**

118.186 **Pursue its awareness-raising efforts on the importance of birth registration, provide birth certificates and protect persons from the consequences of non-registration (Sudan);**

118.187 **Improve the situation of persons with disabilities (Egypt);**

118.188 **Step up efforts to address prejudice against children with disabilities to ensure that such children have access to health care and inclusive education (Bulgaria);**

118.189 **Adopt the necessary policies to ensure that children with disabilities are given equal opportunities in education and ensure that they are fully integrated into school systems, free from discrimination of any kind (State of Palestine);**

118.190 **Ensure that children with disabilities have access to health care and combat the stigmatization of and prejudice against children with disabilities (Timor-Leste);**

118.191 **Accelerate the promulgation of the law on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and human trafficking (Zimbabwe).**

119. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Benin and have been noted by Benin:**

119.1 **Strengthen efforts to prevent and combat arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial executions and excessive use of force by the security forces (Italy);**

119.2 **Set specific, measurable, achievable and relevant goals, in consultation with all stakeholders, in order to reduce bureaucracy (Haiti);**

119.3 **Ensure that all national legislation complies with international standards on freedom of expression and media freedom, and take steps to prevent arbitrary suspension of media outlets (Ireland);**

119.4 **Resist calls to further liberalize abortion and instead implement laws aimed at protecting the right to life of the unborn, and recognize that life starts at conception (Kenya);**

119.5 **Take urgent measures to investigate and sanction before justice harmful practices, such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation, widowhood practice, levirate and sororate, and purification rites for adulterous women (Argentina);**

119.6 **Adopt measures against child activities in convents dedicated to voodoo, where child abuses take place. Additionally, take measures to sanction and prevent the practice of infanticide of so-called "witch children" (Honduras).**

119.7 **As almost 90 per cent of children in Benin have unfortunately been victims of violence at school, organize a national campaign for raising awareness against these unacceptable offences (Croatia).**

120. **All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Benin was headed by H.E. Joseph Fifamin DJOGBENOU, Garde des Sceaux, Ministre de la Justice et de la Législation, and composed of the following members:

- Son Excellence M. Eloi LAOUROU, Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent;
- Son Excellence M. Boniface YEHOUETOME, Deuxième Vice-Président de l'Assemblée Nationale du Bénin;
- Mme A. Inès Laurenda HADONOU épouse TOFFOUN, Directrice de l'Administration Pénitentiaire et de la Protection des Droits Humains;
- M. Maurille BIAOU, Deuxième Conseiller;
- M. Jimy AGONGBONON, Premier Secrétaire;
- M. Pierre FANDY, Premier Secrétaire;
- M. Boris Pierre TOKPANOU, en service à la Direction de l'Administration Pénitentiaire et de la Protection des Droits Humains;
- Mme Fifamè GOUSSOUEMEDE épouse DOVONOU, Attachée.